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ABSTRACT

Sponsored by Commission 13 of the American College Personnel Association, this preconvention workshop covered short term, educational, vocational, and group counseling for adults in higher education. A case history in vocational counseling was presented for discussion, together with specific questions; and typical counseling problems were illustrated. (The document includes 38 references, a recommended adult reading list of 50 significant modern books, data on participant evaluation of the workshop itself, the workshop agenda and objectives, and lists of faculty, registrants, and members of the planning committee.) (LY)

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PROCEEDINGS OF A PRE CONVENTION WORKSHOP

COUNSELING ADULTS: CONTEMPORARY DIMENSIONS

Counseling: Short-Term

Educational

Vocational

Group

Case Presentation and Discussion

A REPORT OF COMMISSION XIII

STUDENT PERSONNEL WORK FOR ADULTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

AMERICAN COLLEGE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

Clarence H. Thompson  
Editor

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## FORWARD

"Counseling Adults" has begun to receive attention by the profession nationally. More and more conference programs are being designed around themes related to the adult student. The Adult Student Personnel Association, the American College Personnel Association, and the Association of University Evening Colleges have included sessions on adult student problems in their annual meetings.

Commission XIII of the American College Personnel Association deals with the area of "Student Personnel Work for Adults in Higher Education." This group of personnel workers and administrators has been in the forefront espousing the cause of the adult student for years.

These proceedings are of the third workshop conducted by Commission XIII ACPA. Held in Las Vegas, Nevada, this workshop pursued the subject "Counseling Adults: Contemporary Dimensions." The first was held in Dallas, Texas, in 1967 on the theme "Counseling the Adult Student." The second workshop was conducted in Detroit, Michigan, in 1968 and utilized the title "College Personnel Services for the Adult: Student Assistance, Involvement, Development."

As immediate past chairman of the commission and editor of the proceedings, the undersigned is indebted to many persons for the success of this important undertaking. To Dr. Goldie R. Kaback, current chairman of Commission XIII and to Dr. Joseph A. Fisher,

John E. Grenfell and Reuben McDaniel Jr., each of whom made one of the outstanding presentations, I acknowledge especial gratitude.

To the other members of Commission XIII for their loyalty, their ideas and cooperation, and to the actual participants of the Workshop, without whose wholehearted involvement the experience would have been less meaningful, my sincere thanks. To Dr. Wilton Pruitt, Coordinator of the Commissions, and to the Executive Committee of ACPA for encouragement and financial assistance, go our grateful appreciation.

Clarence H. Thompson  
Drake University  
June, 1969

## INTRODUCTION

The papers presented in these proceedings represent a philosophy - that the adult in higher education has the right to counseling services at his respective institution so that he may continue to grow and develop as an individual and to realize his projected academic and vocational plans.

The frank interchange of ideas during the 1969 Pre-Convention Workshop not only pointed to the need for more research and investigation in the area of Counseling Adults but also underscored the value of personal communication between student personnel workers from a variety of settings who are working with adults.

It is the hope of the workshop committee that the experiences from the 1969 Pre-Convention Workshop on "Counseling Adults: Contemporary Dimensions, " will serve to stimulate future professional meetings on this most important topic.

Goldie Ruth Kaback  
Workshop Chairman  
June, 1969



## SHORT-TERM COUNSELING OF ADULTS --

### HOW, WHEN, WHERE

Ruben R. McDaniel, Jr.  
Director, Division of Educational Services  
Baldwin-Wallace College

Most of the education and training of counselors is directed toward relatively long-term relationships with clients. A basic hypothesis of much of the literature in the field is that the counselor will have more than one meeting with the client and that these meetings will be conducted in a situation in which the counselor has access to records, anecdotal data, etc. and that the counselor will have had an opportunity to prepare for the counseling contact. These conditions may not prevail for the counselor of adults. A large majority of my own personal contacts with students and the contacts of my fellow counselors are in an atmosphere in which the best result possible is short-term counseling.

You will note that I said "the best result possible" and not "the best possible result." If we had our way, we would prefer to enter counseling relationships with the adult student under conditions which would enable us to operate at maximum effectiveness. Unfortunately, we do not have our way. Some persons would argue that the kind of on-the-spot short-term relationships that we have with adults are so totally unstructured and lack so many of the normal prerequisites for a good counseling relationship, that it is not proper to call these encounters counseling.



This position is evading the issue. We have some basic responsibility to our client population. Meaningful and effective techniques for promoting growth through short-term counseling relationships need to be developed. Therefore, some of my observations on the short-term counseling of adults, in a hope that they might be helpful to you.

In order that we might clearly understand the topic under discussion, let me indicate that I will be talking as much about the role of the counselor in his short-term relationships with the adult as I am about counseling per se. There is certainly good reason to differentiate between three of the major roles which a counselor might play. First, he engages in counseling in the traditional sense of the word. Secondly, a counselor does a certain amount of advising and there has been traditionally some conflict in the counseling literature in an attempt to differentiate between counseling and advising. In addition to these two roles, the counselor does a certain amount of administering because of his unique relationship with students, faculty and staff. Some of you might be interested in a discussion of the various roles of the counselor of adults, and, if so, I would refer you to Chapter Nine of the book, "Student Personnel Services for Adults in Higher Education," edited by Martha L. Farmer. In this chapter, Dr. John Braund discusses this topic in some detail.

Cottle and Downie in their book "Procedures and Preparation for Counseling" indicate that, "Successful counseling is based upon a

thorough knowledge of the factors affecting individual behavior and the ability to help a client understand and accept these factors so that they may plan an appropriate part in future behavior. " The authors further say "A counselor must be able to relate to clients in a manner that inspires confidence and trust, that respects the integrity and capacities of the client. " Not only counseling but also advising and administering can be carried out in such a way as to satisfy these criteria. Therefore, including the activities of advising and administering in this discussion seems appropriate. It should be noted that good advising can indeed lead to counseling. Advising which is done in such a way as to present meaningful alternatives to the client and which then goes on to lay the groundwork for the establishment of a meaningful relationship between client and counselor, can be one of the most effective roles of the counselor. Even the way in which the administrative functions of the counselor are conducted have an important bearing on the potential for meaningful counseling relationships.

In this presentation, therefore, I will attempt to discuss the entire range of short-term relationships between the counselor and his client population and ways in which these relationships can be made meaningful and effective.

There are significant factors which create a need for short-term counseling. The first of these factors is the nature of the adult client.

Adults tend to be reluctant to take their problems to others. By the very nature of their position in life, they feel that they should be able to handle most of their problems themselves. For example, the adult may feel uneasy in his present vocational situation. At the same time, he may feel that his job situation is outside of his school relationships except as school is an opportunity to expand his vocational horizons or an opportunity to increase his economic worth on the market place. This student may find it extremely difficult to make an appointment to see a counselor about vocational guidance. At the same time, he may find an informal situation such as a registration period, a golden opportunity to say to a counselor, "Do you think I am too old to go to law school?" There are at least three answers to this kind of a question, "Yes, " "No, " or "Why do you ask?". None of the three may be good standard counseling answers, however, the third answer does leave the door open for discussion right on the spot of the possible problem.

A second factor is that many adult students may not have had experience with counselors in their previous educational programs. The existence of well-trained and competent counselors in high schools should not be taken for granted. Many of our students were in school at a time in which the counselor was simply a person who helped kids get into college. In any case, the previous experiential pattern of the student may not include meaningful counseling relationships.

In addition, the nature of the life style of many adult students is such that short-term counseling may be the only kind of counseling they get. The adult student does not have a great deal of time. He is in a pressure situation. Involved with the college on a part-time basis, he is seldom wandering around the campus with a problem on his mind seeking help. Usually when he comes into your environment, i. e. the campus, he is moving with a purpose. He may not even associate the college with an opportunity to get counseling assistance.

These factors, the nature of the student, his previous experience (or lack of experience) with counselors and the nature of the situation means that a good bit of the counselor's work will be done on a short-term, impromptu basis.

Let us take a look at the different kinds of opportunities which might exist for short-term counseling. First let me talk about planned activities. While it may seem to be inappropriate to talk about planned short-term counseling, any serious counselor of adults must plan both formal and informal methods and ways in which he can enter into short-term counseling relationships with students.

First the counselor should have some influence on the planning of adult student social events. If he can help to create an atmosphere in which students feel relaxed and at ease with the institution, with their fellow students, with faculty and staff, then the student is more likely

to approach the counselor and provide a situation in which short-term counseling can be done. In addition to regularly planned social events, the counselor should plan orientation meetings for new students and for current students at which time he can gain the confidence of the students and give them an opportunity to see him in action. If these events are planned with adequate slack time as well as opportunities for the counselor to mix with the students, then this is a good opportunity for short-term counseling. Third, it is entirely possible for the counselor to arrange group meetings as opposed to group counseling sessions at which time he will have an opportunity to talk with students about either specific problems or general problems on campus. These group meetings give the counselor a chance to meet with students and gives them an opportunity to know him. For example, from time to time I have gone into several of our large introductory classes and asked for groups of six or seven students to work with me on a particular institutional problem. This is usually on a one shot basis and is an honest attempt on my part to get information from students. At the same time, these students get to know me better and quite often will extend their relationship with me to include some kinds of counseling. They also have a tendency to go back to the class and talk about the results of their group meeting and if I have made a good impression, other students in the class will be more likely to feel that I am approachable.



Of course, there are the short-term counseling sessions which take place in your office. These include both drop-ins and appointments. There are certain hours in the evening in which students are more likely to drop in than others, for example, in the twenty minutes just before classes start or at the break between classes. I try to keep these time blocks free from regular appointments so that I will be available in case a student does drop in. By being in the outer office during these time periods, students who are just casually coming by the office to pick up a brochure or to leave a note for the professor feel free to say "Good Evening" and perhaps stop and chat for a minute or two. These drop-in kinds of contacts are very helpful in establishing rapport with students and on more than one occasion meaningful counseling has resulted. There are some students who will make appointments and come in to see you for what is essentially short-term counseling. A student wants to know whether or not he should drop a class. The college regulations do not permit a series of weekly appointments in a situation such as this. The student would like to receive help quickly. On another occasion a student drops in to tell you that he is being transferred out of town and will have to drop out of school. In some cases this is simply a process of information giving. The student is giving you some information and is trying to find out how to go about dropping out of school properly. In other cases, however, the student

is using this particular conference to seek an entree for help. The student may be anxious about his educational future in the light of his relocation. He may be anxious about taking a new job and re-settling his family, etc. We must learn to catch these factors without unnecessary intrusion on the lives of our client population. I consider these four kinds of short-term counseling contacts as the more formal or pre-arranged or planned kind of contacts; social affairs, orientations, group meetings and office contacts.

In addition to these more formal contacts, there are a large number of very informal contacts in which short-term counseling can take place. For example, when counselors are busy at registration making schedules for those students who need immediate help, then the chances for short-term counseling are pretty slim. However, if it can be arranged to have faculty advisors or upper class students helping with short-term course planning then the counselor is free to move about at registration and to spot situations which might call for his particular talents.

One of my most rewarding counseling experiences occurred at a registration. A student was going through the rather complicated registration procedures at Baldwin-Wallace when she burst into tears. She rapidly began to leave the registration area, and I managed to stop her at the door. When I asked what was wrong, she said simply that she hadn't been to college before and this whole



process was so complicated it was very obvious that she was not going to be able to make it. We walked outside the front door and sat down on the steps for a few minutes, and I gave her a chance to calm down and talked with her briefly about some of her anxieties related to going to college. I then arranged to have one of my secretaries take her through the rest of the registration procedure. She is still in school and doing well thank you.

There was no particular secret to what I did except that I was available so that if anyone had questions he could stop and ask. I don't think that I have had a registration within the last three years in which there was not at least one meaningful and real counseling contact.

A second kind of informal counseling situation which can be created by the counselor is in the halls of the school. While I have an office, and a rather plush one I might add, I make it a point three or four times each quarter to simply wander the halls of the classroom buildings, particularly during class breaks. It is very seldom indeed that I manage to spend a night like this without meeting at least one student who wants to talk about changing his major or about a family problem which is going to mean a change in his life style or some other circumstance. In many cases these students would have eventually come in to see me but that may have

been too late. By making myself available on a regularly planned basis where students are, I am sure that I have done some significant preventive counseling. Planned visitations to the classroom buildings, to the snack shop, to any of the places in which the students might gather in an informal way, is an important part of the adult counselors responsibilities.

Of course, there are many unplanned short-term counseling opportunities. I call these "opportunities by accident." The real secret is never to be in so much of a hurry that you don't take the time to sense whether or not you are simply receiving information or being asked to give some direction or whether or not an opportunity for a short-term counseling relationship exists.

Except in extreme cases, I disapprove of unlisted phone numbers for counselors. The student who is sitting at home thoroughly frustrated by an assignment, with two screaming kids and a nagging wife, but who remembers the fact that you have been seen around in the hall, that you have gotten a reasonably decent reputation from other students, might just feel that the phone is a meaningful way in which to get some help. If your name isn't listed, you can be pretty sure he can't reach you.

There are other kinds of "by accident" counseling that occur. If you are fortunate enough to live in close proximity to the school,

you will find yourself confronted in the super market, in the five and dime, as you sit down to eat a hamburger in a local snack shop. These accidental meetings with students are often the prelude to meaningful counseling relationships.

The major point that I wish to make is that we must create opportunities for short-term counseling to take place. We must consciously plan some of these opportunities. If a careful review is made of all of the potential opportunities which could be planned and structured for short-term counseling, then we would find that we would have more work to do that we can do. In addition, we must be prepared to deal with the unstructured and unplanned informal counseling relationships.

Let us now turn our discussion to some of the techniques of the short-term counseling. The first and most obvious one, of course, is that we must be increasingly sensitive. While I do not question that counselors key themselves up for their normal counseling relationships with students, it does seem as though we may not use all of our training in our short-term, non-structured relationships. The counselor must be alert. Unless he is aware of the constant potential for counseling he will tend to consider himself a counselor when in his office and a school official when outside of his office. What is needed is to have each counselor

feel that as long as he is on duty in any way he is indeed serving a counseling function. You cannot have every student's file with you when you are at registration. On the other hand, you can be extremely knowledgeable about your student body. Detailed information about your general student population can serve in lieu of a specific counseling file when you meet a student in the hall or in the snack bar or when you are working in a small group session. You should know such things as the average age of the students, the kinds of vocations which your student population would tend to be interested in, etc. etc. These bits and pieces of information, when put together in a comprehensive picture of the evening student population, can serve you well when talking to a particular student. For example, adult students at Baldwin-Wallace College tend to be in the age range of 22-40. They tend to cluster around 27. Therefore, when I talk to an 18 year old young man who is in the evening program at Baldwin-Wallace, I know that he is in a very small minority and that this factor may be affecting his relationships with himself and with the institution. I also noted that we have a large number of students who have previously failed out of college. While I never label anyone as a fail out when I meet them in a short-term counseling situation, I am aware of the fact that this is a potential source of anxiety for many of our students.

Rapport needs to be seriously considered, particularly because short-term counseling may be conducted in the most unsatisfactory of physical surroundings. It is difficult to establish rapport when you are standing at a registration desk in the college union. Informality may be easy in the snack shop but counseling rapport is not. The primary factor which I have found that affects the rapport of the short-term counseling relationship is a human characteristic called gentleness. If the counselor is gentle in his short-term relationships as opposed to being abrupt, harsh, perhaps too much in a hurry, then I find that rapport can be established quickly.

A third technique that we need to observe in short-term counseling is that of feedback. It is important that we show our client that we understand what he is trying to communicate to us. It is easy in a short-term counseling relationship to rush past meaningful feedback and move on to some kind of problem solution. There always seems to be a lack of time in the short-term counseling relationship. On the other hand, just as it is important in our more traditional kinds of counseling relationships that we give the client meaningful and accurate feedback that shows an understanding and clarification of the clients feeling, so it is also important in short-term counseling relationships.

One of the most important techniques to remember in a short-



term counseling situation is observation. It is necessary to notice the physical appearance of our client, particularly with respect to possible agitation. For example, does the client ask what seems to be a normal kind of question in a confidential tone of voice? Does it seem that the client is particularly apologetic as he approaches you with a problem or concern? Either of these things and others like them, which I am sure you can think of yourself, indicate that you should be particularly alert for a counseling opportunity.

Short-term counseling does not, by definition, mean that no planning will take place or that we are simply trying to solve some immediate on-the-spot problem. It seems to me that planning is as important in short-term counseling as in any other kind of counseling. If we can give direction to the client and help him develop some plans for attack on his problems, we will have gone a long way toward achieving our counseling goal. It is particularly important that we leave the client with a sense of order and of direction. One of the most obvious weaknesses of short-term counseling is that we can leave the client with a feeling that the situation has indeed been a hectic one and therefore that the encounter was not meaningful.

The closing of a short-term counseling interview is extremely significant. While the situation may be informal and it may be quick, it is necessary that we close the relationship in an open-ended

fashion. One of the most obvious things about short-term counseling is that it is at it's best when it leaves the client with the feeling that further relationships with the counselor might be profitable if he feels the need.

Let us now turn for a minute to look at the possible results of short-term counseling. The first is obviously long-term counseling. A short-term counseling encounter might be the entree to a more formal and more meaningfully structured long-term counseling relationship with the client. Clients who may not come in to your office for counseling or whose problems are such that they would not normally be referred to you by other members of the college community should find that the informal contact through an orientation program or through an encounter with a counselor at a registration period is the opening of the door to a meaningful long-term counseling relationship.

A second obvious result of short-term counseling is a referral. Let me caution you at this point that I do understand short-term counseling, i. e. five, ten, fifteen minutes, may not be enough for the counselor to determine that a referral is required. However, there are certain instances in which it becomes apparent that a referral is in order. For example, if the counseling contact involves what seems to be a vocational guidance situation then it is possible



that the client might be referred immediately to the vocational guidance counselor. It is my own feeling that we are more likely to be successful if we can make the referral on the spot rather than ask the client to come into our office and then make a referral. In the latter case, it often seems to the client that he is getting the run around and as a person in a pressure situation with little time, he does not appreciate this kind of treatment.

The third possible result is termination of his counseling situation right at the point of short-term counseling. Two things should be apparent to the counselor if he decides that termination is the most desirable result. The first of these is counselee growth. It is indeed possible, if you are sensitive to the short-term counseling relationship, to see growth in a client in a very short period of time. Many adult clients experience meaningful insights into themselves and their relationship with their environments as a result of brief encounters with well trained counselors. It may be that you are handling a problem which is of such a nature that what the counselee needed was a certain degree of reassurance or a certain amount of well-thought out advice. In either case, we might very well see both growth on the part of the counselee and we might experience within ourselves a certain degree of satisfaction about the relationship which indicates to us that the relationship should be terminated.

Training in the methodology of short-term counseling is

necessary. This technique should be included in practicum experiences. It would be difficult to structure an ideal practicum situation in which the supervisor could assist the student in developing meaningful techniques for short-term counseling. However, we need to give serious consideration to some possibilities. For example, we could structure more role playing which involves short-term counseling relationships. Also we could send our practicum students into the field and have a trained observer watch them as they engage in short-term counseling. The use of video tape to observe the activities of a counselor in a situation such as an orientation program is a possibility. In addition to practicum experiences for the students of counseling, we certainly should provide for in-service training for our counselors in this area. If nothing else, we need to sensitize them to the potential value of this device.

At the same time that we are talking about training, we need to talk about the development of case histories for short-term counseling situations. It is difficult, when away from the conveniences of the office, to develop a meaningful case history. However, the conscientious counselor can make on-the-spot notations about one-to-one encounters which he has in non-structured situations which may be short-term counseling situations. I find that when I come back to the office and review these short statements about these

encounters I follow up on some cases which at the moment I did not think about in terms of a counseling relationship but which, on reflection, I view as a situation which needs further attention. Case conferences which cover the experiences of counselors in a situation such as an orientation program are valuable. These case conferences can serve to make our counselors more sensitive and to give them direction and guidance.

There are some significant questions which must be asked about short-term counseling. The first of these involves the role of our faculties. How many of the one-to-one encounters they have with students could be enhanced by additional training in counseling techniques. In addition, are they using their encounters with our students for meaningful referrals?

A second area which has occurred over and over again is the possible training of para-professionals to do short-term counseling. Can they help? Particularly can they help as facilitators of the counseling relationship?

We need to question the effectiveness of short-term counseling. I am not sure myself whether or not it is simply a stop-gap measure which I have used because of lack of adequate counseling staff or whether or not it has been an effective means of counseling communication with my clientele. The question that I raise within myself is

whether or not I can reach the objective of growth for the client in a short-term counseling relationship.

The future of short-term counseling seems to be clear. It does not appear as though within the near future we will have enough counselors or enough acceptance on the part of our student body to simply confine ourselves to the techniques and advantages of the long-term counseling relationship. As we have more and more students entering our educational institutions and as we find it more and more difficult to find an adequate number of well-trained people to staff our counseling centers, then it becomes increasingly apparent that we must find some way to make the role of the adult counselor meaningful in the short-term.

## THE CASE OF HENRY L. :

### Adult Student

Reason for Referral: Mr. L. is unhappy with his present work situation and came to the counselor to discuss his present job in light of his experiences, talents, education, and interests. He is currently enrolled in a psychology course at one of the Evening Colleges.

Identifying Data and Description: Mr. L. is a dark complexioned forty-year old man of small stature. He was dressed neatly for the interviews. He has a full-grown goatee; his hair and beard are graying. Although born in Peru, he speaks English quite well and his enunciation is very good. He was extremely cooperative, verbal, and frank throughout the counseling and testing sessions.

Mr. L. is married to a native-born, white, American school teacher. They live in an upper-middle class neighborhood of the city. His mother and his older brother, who is a physician, still live in Peru. His father, who was a physician, died several years ago.

Personal Relationships and Interests: Mr. L. finds that he has little in common with the men at his office. He has, however, made friends with a priest at one of the universities in a neighboring state and together they are working on a plan to establish an international student forum with the major objectives of: 1) establishing international peace; 2) direct students' attention toward social welfare among their own people in their respective countries; 3) develop student leadership for future leadership in their own countries. Both he and his wife are very much involved in several organizations that are interested in international peace and the social welfare of underdeveloped countries.

Personally, Mr. L. stated that he is very much interested in classical music and political discussions. He enjoys working with his hands and during the interviews showed the counselor several small pieces of sculpture which he had made.

With regard to occupational interests, Mr. L. stated that he would like to work, in order of preference, as a social worker, personnel worker, counselor in a camp, teacher, editor of an international newsletter or journal. He stated that his interest in social work or personnel or counseling work is based on his interest in people, to assist them, and



to aid them in becoming more capable of handling their own problems. He feels that his work as a parish priest in Peru with young people and his experiences as a former college instructor has given him some experience in relation to his current vocational interests.

During one of the interviews, Mr. L. indicated that although he is very much interested in working with people, particularly young people, his occupation or work would not necessarily have to entail work in a helping relationship as long as it was interesting. He felt that his avocational interests could satisfy his need to work with people. With regard to his interest as editor of a newsletter or journal in the international field, he felt that he would like a position of this kind in order to be able to get his ideas and opinions regarding peace across to many people in different countries. He did, however, indicate that he has very little experience in writing and questions his ability in this regard.

Educational and Work History: Mr. L. was born and brought up in Peru and obtained most of his education in that country. He indicated that he had done quite well in both the elementary and high schools that he had attended in Peru. On the basis of a competitive examination he was admitted to the University and had two years in Chemistry, Zoology, Botany and Physics. After his first two years he took courses only in Chemistry, Zoology and Botany and obtained his baccalaureate degree. During his last two years at the university he had also had courses in Philosophy. Shortly after he obtained his degree he went to the Propagation of the Faith University in Rome called the Urban VIII University where he spent four years studying for a degree in Theology. This school in Rome had highly competitive standards for acceptance. It does not grant a degree nor furnish transcripts; it does issue a Certificate of completion of work at the end of four years.

After returning from Rome, Mr. L. was ordained as a priest and his first job was teaching Chemistry at one of the small colleges in Peru where he stayed for six years. He would have preferred teaching Biology but since a Chemistry teacher was needed, he was assigned to that department. In addition to his teaching assignment, he was assigned to a parish to help develop social activities for the young people of that parish. He initiated young adult groups and student activities in the parish and helped to found small cottage industries for the young girls.

During one of the interviews, Mr. L. stated that he had never thought of himself as working outside a college setting but he soon realized that his work as a parish priest with young people gave him

much satisfaction. He disliked what he felt was his role as a disciplinarian at the College; however, he did enjoy his contacts with students when they sought him out regarding their personal problems.

While teaching, he requested and obtained permission to take a Retreat which was run on a Seminar basis. He became very much interested in the Seminars and as a result of his work was assigned as a Seminar Director, a job which necessitated travel to various countries. He held this position for two years and then left the priesthood.

Mr. L. then held a number of temporary per diem jobs. Coming to the United States, he found a temporary clerical position with a large accounting firm where he is now currently employed on a permanent basis. Although he regards this position as a means for a livelihood, he does not find the work particularly interesting.

Interview Contacts: Mr. L. was seen for the initial interview in November, 1967. The information summarized above was obtained during the November and December interviews. In January, 1968, a battery of tests was administered. Mr. L. was then seen again in February and March, 1968.

#### Summary of Psychometric Data - January, 1968:

##### Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale:

Verbal Scale IQ: 141  
Performance Scale IQ: 125  
Full Scale IQ: 136

##### Subtest Scaled Scores:

##### Verbal:

Information	15
Comprehension	17
Arithmetic	17
Similarities	16
Digit Span	14
Vocabulary	18



Performance:

Digit Symbol	8
Picture Completion	14
Block Design	16
Picture Arrangement	12
Object Assembly	15

During this test, Mr. L. approached each task in a very serious, scholarly manner. He was courteous throughout; he did require some support and reassurance in relation to procedures and word meanings. He was most conscientious and spent a great deal of time on the untimed tests. When he left he expressed surprise at the time that he had spent on the tests and expressed his gratitude for the services rendered.

Although Mr. L's scores on the WAIS are in the very superior and superior range, his potential is probably much higher. It is to be noted that the verbal part of the WAIS requires knowledge of a culture quite different from his own. For example, he was not too certain about the date of Washington's birthday and the number of senators in the U. S. Senate. He obtained the highest scores possible on the arithmetical reasoning and rote memory tests. The speed with which he solved the arithmetical problems was an unusual experience for the examiner.

Although English is not Mr. L's native language, his command of the language and his choice of words to express himself, were superior. His way of dealing with the vocabulary list was interesting. He would grope, although not for long, for he was rapid in everything that he did, until he found the exact nuance that he had been searching for to convey his meaning. Generally, his manner of expressing himself indicated a very high degree of abstraction in his thought processes.

Mr. L. spent a good deal of time giving several alternatives to the everyday social situations which were presented to him in the WAIS. Since he is very precise and careful, his score on Digit Symbol was below average, the only score where he is below superior ability. He worked in an effortless manner with the spatial material and generally received extra credit for speed. He almost never made a false move.

The psychologist who administered the tests found Mr. L. to be a pleasant, charming person who seemed relaxed and quite in command of each test as it was presented to him, despite some hesitancy with some of the verbal material.

On the Strong Vocational Interest Blank for Men, he scored highest in the areas of psychiatrist, public administrator, rehabilitation counselor, social worker, and psychologist. His lowest scores were for pharmacist, carpenter, policeman, senior C. P. A., and office worker. During one of the interviews, Mr. L. stated that his own order of preference for occupations would be: social worker, personnel worker, vocational counselor, teacher, and editor.

His rate of reading and comprehension were equivalent to college freshmen.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As the counselor in your own student personnel department, what further steps would you take with this client? Why?
2. What other tests or information would you require preparatory to or during the counseling sessions with this client? Why?
3. What would be the nature of subsequent counseling sessions? Areas of concentration? Practical suggestions?

Follow-up information - after audience participation and discussion:

1. Counselor met with consultant. Consultant recalls that the client was supposed to have a certificate from Peru regarding his work with the young people. Suggested that counselor explore this matter with client and to indicate to client that such a certificate might be necessary for work in the social service area; counselor to work with client in the preparation of a resume which would be necessary for any kind of work.

2. Consultant and counselor agreed that client's level of work was very much below his capacities; that he probably had the interest and the ability to work in the fields of counseling or social work; that while he would have to start at a beginner's level, he appears to have the personality, the intelligence, and the ability to progress to a senior capacity. The client's own wishes would preclude administration, although he has the abilities to work in such a capacity; he could work in community agencies dealing with personal or family problems. In view of the shortage of personnel in the social service field in the City, both counselor and consultant felt that although client does not have a master's degree, several agencies in the City would probably be interested in him as a possible counselor with youth.

3. In a subsequent meeting with the client, counselor suggested that Mr. L. might be interested in applying to the Dept. of Welfare since they were recruiting case workers. Several weeks later, Mr. L. reported that he had been interviewed for a position with the Dept. of Welfare but had turned down the position that had been offered to him as a case worker - he had not been particularly impressed with the interview nor with the nature of the work as it had been outlined to him.

4. After the test results had been summarized during a counseling interview with Mr. L. he seemed pleased that the results had confirmed his interests in the social service area.

5. Counselor and consultant in contact with heads of programs for disadvantaged in the community. An appointment was arranged for Mr. L. with the director of one such program.

6. Mr. L. hired as a counselor to work with disadvantaged youth.

Case Closed

## EDUCATIONAL COUNSELING FOR ADULTS

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### Defining the Area of Educational Counseling

Educational counseling can be defined very simply as counseling for overcoming educational handicaps. The word counseling refers to a process of communicating deeper concerns to another for assistance in resolving conflicts or gaining more objective views of the nature of problems. The phrase "educational handicaps" refers to training or skill deficiencies of an academic sort which make further learning in a particular area either unnecessarily difficult, unlikely, or even impossible.

The difference between educational counseling and other types is primarily a matter of orientation. Before anything can be a counseling matter, it must usually pose some difficulty or a threat to the person or some aspect of his effective pursuit of self-fulfillment. In educational counseling, the central focus is on learning difficulties centered around formal educational processes. This sort of counseling may differ from psychotherapy primarily because of the depth and nature of the problems dealt with. The counseling processes identified with psychotherapy are generally of such a basic nature that they effect a great portion of the total life functioning



of the individual. Increasingly in today's society, there are numerous situations in which, in a broader sense, one's life functioning can be seriously impaired because of academic or scholastic difficulties. Therefore one must be prepared to find that a number of educational counseling cases may greatly resemble psychotherapy because of the central nature of education in self-realization in today's society.

Educational counseling applied to adults as a distinct group is becoming increasingly more important because education is fast becoming a way of life in our society. Learning has taken on new dimensions because of the very nature of contemporary society. Education can no longer limit to a set period of childhood development. Our society has changed and will continue to change to such an extent and with such speed that in the course of the normal vocational life, any given individual can expect to need to be reeducated or trained several times before retirement. Education is a life need today and it continues to be the most effective way to develop human potentiality.

Educational opportunities have been immensely expanded to meet the educational demands of a changing society. In the past, educational opportunities at higher levels especially were much more limited. Because of the limited incomes of many families,

higher education was simply beyond the means of most people. The nature of work required in the past was such that very little leisure time was available for those who might in some way be able to finance further education. Released time to attend class on company sponsored educational programs were unknown a few dozen years ago. The agrarian character of American society in past years tended to spread people out geographically so that educational opportunities were also limited because of the problems of transportation. No doubt educational opportunities were simply unknown in many instances. There is some evidence that the lower standard of living of many people effected their dietary habits and contributed to the higher incidence of disease, the lowering of vitality, and played an important role in retarding physical development in early periods of growth which are known to effect learning ability in later life. Even individuals who might be able to overcome financial limitations lacked the necessary educational background to make taking up education in later periods of life practical for a large percentage of the population.

It must be noted that because of lack of travel and communication there was less demand for higher education by the masses in times past. Today ideas of a good life are widely publicized and known and it is easier to change occupations or improve working conditions. The

result has been higher pay and better work conditions. These higher paying jobs have usually been clearly associated to educational levels. The great advances in mass communication made information regarding life and its possibilities available to more people and it stimulated many more to prepare for more self-fulfilling, satisfying, better paying jobs. In the face of rapid social change, many people developed personal reasons for wishing to further their education. They wish to know how to get along with people better, how to make a positive contribution to solving social problems, how to enrich their leisure time, how to develop their human potentialities, and especially women, have a growing need to learn how to live in a freer society. People naturally enjoy the learning process; this natural tendency is fostered by the elementary and secondary school when the educational process is successful. Because of advances in educational methods and techniques more children receive better education, and the general level of aspiration of the populous is raised. Most people entering adult education programs have a fairly specific goal in mind. It may be phrased in somewhat general terms for some persons, for example, learning to accept social responsibilities; it may be very specific for others, for example, to prepare for a particular job. Often adults enter education to satisfy psychological needs because they feel intellectually lonely, and seek the stimulating companionship of fellow learners. There are undoubtedly a large



number of adults who enter education simply because they are curious and enjoy the challenge which study offers. Out of the motives for education comes its emotional significance.

### Types of Educational Counseling Problems

As was indicated earlier, there is an interesting relationship between personality problems and educational problems. The learning styles of individuals seems to be seriously effected by their personality.

One type can be called the timid learner. It is typified by Mrs. A who became widowed at 45 and found it necessary to make a new life in order to support and raise her four children. Some 15 years earlier she had graduated from college. Like many women, she had always considered her education as a sort of insurance policy so it was natural for her to fall back on it at this time. She returned to college to get a teaching certificate, using part of her insurance money and savings to pay for these expenses and to maintain her family until she completed her program. Her enthusiasm and determination to overcome difficulties provided motivation for her in the beginning and things looked good, however, before the second semester was completed, she became increasingly concerned about her ability to learn; she began finding it increasingly difficult to concentrate on her studies and she became quite worried about her

children. She began failing tests and getting behind in her work as a result. A crisis in her educational career was reached when she was criticized for the way she handled children in practice teaching. Seeing her limited insurance and savings being spent and fearing ultimate failure, she suddenly decided to leave school and take a job as a secretary in a business firm. The job was not commensurate with her native abilities and not interesting to her, but it was able to allay her anxiety and insecurity about herself. She thus condemned herself to lead a frustrating life and has indirectly limited the educational futures of her four children because of limited opportunities to improve her income.

The primary difficulty that Mrs. A. encountered was psychological in nature, not academic. However, the two worked so closely together that she easily confused them and without proper guidance she will probably resign herself to a frustrating life unnecessarily.

Another type, the fickle learner, is typified by Mr. B. By dint of hard work and long hours, he became quite successful in a small business. At the age of 48 on a hunting trip, he had occasion to spend several days snowbound with a very well-educated and stimulating individual who astounded Mr. B. with his wide range of interests and accomplishment. After this experience,

he carefully examined his own life and realized that all he had known was business and his only pleasure or accomplishment was making money. He became gravely dissatisfied with his life despite his apparent financial success. Taking well-known personalities like Eisenhower and Churchill as examples, he gathered up his courage and enrolled in an art course. However, he did not make progress at a rate which satisfied him. He became increasingly critical of his work and began to question his artistic talent. Therefore, after a few weeks, he dropped art and began music lessons. He found it tedious to spend so many hours practicing and his progress seemed very slow. He quit music and turned to more academic things. Convinced that his skills were not in his hands, but rather in his head, he began a course in literature. However, he soon found that much of what he had to read was meaningless and it was difficult for him to concentrate on the material. He concluded that he was not really interested in literature and in a very short time dropped the course. He subsequently spent time in golf, and in jogging, bowling, and tennis, but none of these activities seemed to hold his interest and he became convinced that he was basically a failure in every way except his business; therefore, he returned to his business and spent all of his time in his old pursuit of getting rich. Unfortunately, he overworked and in six months had a heart

attack. After this he spent half of his time attending to his business and the other half worrying about his health. In a few months he retired because of increasing fear of having another heart attack, and died soon afterwards, probably as much out of feelings of despair as for pathological reasons.

Another type of learner may be called the sporadic learner. Mrs. C. typifies this sort of student. She was the wife of a successful lawyer and lived in a fashionable suburb, but life became more dull and monotonous as the children grew up and married. She teamed up with several other women of the neighborhood and wives of professional friends of her husband to seek intellectual stimulation. They decided to form a discussion club for themselves but the idea was also accepted enthusiastically by the husbands who were also becoming bored with life. The sessions proved stimulating and rewarding; however, in a couple of years it became increasingly difficult to develop programs for the group and eventually more and more people began skipping or cancelling meetings until the group simply fell apart. By this time Mrs. C. was back to her old way of life again.

All of these people began by really trying to continue their education, they eventually discontinued their education. Probably every person reading these cases can find a number of explanations

for this failure. One will feel the individuals did not concentrate well enough on the task he set out to do, his goals were vague or unrealistic, another will observe the people lacked self-discipline or persistence and didn't give the task enough time to really develop. These and any other explanations may seem satisfactory, but they only explain part of the problems. The real reason all of these individuals failed was because the individual or group did not know how to learn. Each of these individuals would have been well advised to receive some academic counseling before undertaking his educational experience, because not only did they fail at their educational task, their failure closed the door to future efforts at personal development.

#### Educational Counseling Problems of Adults

In order to assist adults in achieving their educational goals, it is very useful to know the most common problems that are likely to be encountered.

##### 1) Lack of self-confidence in one's ability to learn.

Probably no other single problem is more universally encountered in counseling adults in educational matters than lack of confidence in their ability to learn. It is almost universally true that adults, to some degree, fear they are not able to learn as well as they were when they were young.



They seem to be able to recognize at the cognitive level that not everyone can learn everything, that people differ in intelligence, physical strength, dexterity, and special talent and they are able to understand that few men can be outstanding novelists, mathematicians, philosophers, etc. The concern of adults' problem is not over outstanding achievement, however, they fear that they are below average. They fear that they cannot learn what even normal people are able to learn.

This fear or lack of self-confidence in learning seems to have two primary sources; first, a belief, emotionally very strong, that age somehow limits learning ability, and secondly, an underlying emotionally important concern that some important element has been left out or neglected in their personal development or makeup. For example, they wonder if they actually lack normal intelligence, or if they have any talent at all for learning foreign languages, etc.

In dealing with such unfounded fears, the adult needs to be reassured by someone who knows the field of psychology well enough to answer specific questions about the learning abilities of adults. All experimental evidence indicates that a comparison of the relative learning ability of young people and adults does not indicate that adults have a serious handicap in learning.

Rather it seems adults are able to learn most things better than

youth are able to learn them, but it may take the adult a little longer to do it.

Youth appears to have some advantage in learning in areas requiring physical dexterity or bodily strength; this is not surprising. However, even physical strength can be greatly improved in older people in many cases with systematic and scientifically designed exercise. The young seem to be able to remember things better when it comes to mastering rote learning tasks, that is, things which are not particularly meaningful in themselves. Adults find it necessary to unlearn many things in this area because their habits are more deeply set. This would naturally be a handicap in learning this type of material. But rote learning is not the kind of learning which is required in most of our education. At any rate, even this is not insurmountable, it can be overcome with additional practice and the careful development of association patterns.

Usually adults have an advantage in learning because they have greater motivation. They have more settled purposes and needs, their attitude toward learning is more mature and these favorable dispositions make learning much more effective. With maturity, the adult has acquired greater experience and developed a broader range of associative patterns, he has a greater awareness of values,

considerable practice in self-discipline, and a better knowledge of his personal abilities. These are all advantages. In one study a group of women over 42 who took courses at two different institutions received higher course grades than an 18 to 25 year old group of women in the same classes. The advantage for the older group remained despite differences in courses, methods of teaching, or instructors.

This underlying fear or anxiety or lack of self-confidence may not be apparent in the beginning of the educational program. However, it reveals itself quite readily when the student finds himself encountering difficulty in learning and beginning to fall behind in his work. Then he will seem to turn to his age as a rationalization and will frequently verbalize the belief that he can't learn as well now as when he was young. It is practically certain that such a person will explain his problem by commenting that he has been away from studying for years and has nearly forgotten how to use his mind. This, of course, is usually true to a certain extent and it is usually advisable for an older student returning again to brush up on his learning skills if it is true, but this does not mean that he cannot learn as well as the student who has not been out of school at all. The counselor should encourage the student to work himself up to his former condition. He must convince the student

that he is able to regain his former skill level with practice and the proper use of learning aids. The student is not bound by age so much as by poor study methods in most cases.

It might be observed in passing that these statements may be made by adults who, in fact, can't learn as well as youth; they are slow learners now and they weren't very good learners as children either! Their problem is they feel that being adults, they are expected to be able to do everything better than children can. This is simply not true. There are dumb kids and dumb adults, so long as one works to his capacity he should make no excuse for his ability.

Unless this anxiety about learning ability is taken care of properly, the adult is very likely to become seriously worried about his basic capacity to learn. If, in fact, he has limited intellectual abilities, his concern should not be whether he is able to learn but rather what he should learn. His problem is one of suiting his ambitions to his abilities, not questioning his abilities. If the educational problem seems to be the worry about ability itself, as is often the case, the best course of action is to get a reliable diagnosis of his ability.

More adults tend to underestimate their ability. This is because they fear that they are unable to learn. It is very useful to ask them, "How do you know for certain you can't learn unless you have tried?" An individual does not have to aspire to become the

world's leading authority to find pleasure and satisfaction in studying a particular subject. The less a person knows or is, the more he has to gain from his effort. Counselors should expect a percentage of adults reentering education will have dark moments and discouraging periods of this sort, and be prepared to deal with them by providing positive reinforcement and realistic evaluation of both goals and ability.

## 2) Unrealistic Expectations of Progress.

Because many adults have grown accustomed to succeeding in whatever they do, it is very upsetting for them to be faced with serious learning obstacles. During many years of their life, they have tended to apply their efforts in areas where they were able to build on past successes. To strike out into new and different areas therefore can prove very threatening to an adult.

When a child attacks a problem, he expects to do much more work to achieve it than the average adult who somehow feels above all this. The adult acts as if he is an exception to the rule of hard work. His goals are set, they are very clear, he has considerable life experience, therefore he concludes he has an unusual advantage. However, there is no royal road to learning, all must take the same route.

It is very important that adults be counseled to set realistic



learning goals. The following points should be kept in mind:

- a. The person must be realistic about what he can achieve, especially about the amount of time required to achieve it.
- b. He must be careful not to begin impulsively on an ambitious learning program about which he is very poorly informed. The better he understands the work required, the better off he will be.
- c. He must be certain that he really wants the goal he has in mind. It is very important to him or is it just something nice or desirable? Is the work required proportionate to the worth of the goal in his own mind?
- d. After setting broad goals, he must divide in into specific subgoals which he can achieve on short periods of time, perhaps monthly or even daily. By dividing the project into parts which can be completed quickly, it will give satisfaction in stages. This maintains motivation and provides a measure of progress. The work for a once-a-week class should be divided into daily tasks which are small and can be accomplished in an hour or so rather than completed in a very long study period once a week. Completing such minor daily and weekly goals provides an obvious means of measuring progress and nothing succeeds like success.

- e. It is wise to learn to enjoy the process as well as the goal of learning. Enjoying the process will make the work of achieving goals much more pleasant and make the learning an integral part of one's life.

### 3) Conflicting Values and Attitudes.

One's points of view strongly influence his learning processes. As people grow, they form definite opinions and attitudes which can influence learning for good or ill. For example, in the study of economics, an adult who has worked as a labor leader will view the course quite differently from a student who is an industrialist or associated with the management function of business.

Having fixed attitudes and values can cause difficulties for older persons attending classes where a variety of points of view and attitudes toward subjects is not only tolerated but actively encouraged. They may feel the teacher knows no more than his students or he is failing to exercise proper authority by not deriding issues himself. In counseling adults having such problems, one should aim to try and develop an understanding that part of education requires developing an understanding of a variety of points of view. Some adults seem to feel it is their duty to settle class problems and they try to impose their view on all, or at least try to monopolize the discussion to keep it "orthodox." Older persons should be

cautioned about such traits or they will not be accepted by the rest of the class and this may sour them on education by making them feel unaccepted. This does not mean that the adult must keep his own insights and contributions under wraps entirely, but only that he should not expect his opinions to have greater weight than anyone else's. Sharing opinions does not mean one should force his personal ideas on others. A useful approach such an adult can use in discussion is to concentrate on learning why each person holds the views he does and try to understand his position, not correct it. He should not force his own opinion on others beyond explaining why he believes what he does nor should he force others to prove their position after explaining it. If they change opinions, it is their own affair. Education is impossible for a person whose values and opinions have hardened to the point that he cannot tolerate new ideas or opposition to his own position.

#### 4) Theoretical or Irrelevant Learning Tasks.

One of the adult's greatest assets in learning is the store of associations he can make by virtue of his past life experiences. His entire life can serve as a resource for background and perspective in learning. An important requirement for deep understanding is the ability to form numerous associations between new matter and previous learning. The more and more varied his past experiences have been, the easier this becomes.

Adults are frequently impatient with subjects which are taught in a general fashion or purely theoretically. They find this sort

of learning irrelevant to life as they have experienced it. Such attitudes can make learning unnecessarily difficult for them because it becomes a constant source of irritation. Such students should compensate for these feelings by making special efforts to apply or relate what they are learning to their lives and life's problems. An added advantage of making such personal applications of subject matter to events which have meaning in his own life is that the student works in the familiar ground where mistakes in application will be obvious to him and this will insure greater accuracy in learning. Such application encourages more interested study because it provides a sort of immediate reward through successful use. One should realize that the application of knowledge may take the form of further questioning, argumentation, and discussion as well as problem solving.

Completely new subjects are difficult to integrate in this way for many students. Therefore it is useful to develop a background and acquire fundamental principles of a field beforehand. To secure this, it is advisable to read introductory or supplementary basic books in the same area. On occasion it may be wise to take a non-credit refresher or survey course if the student is in a degree program where grades are important.

The counselor should always foster the development of as wide

a range of interests as possible in clients so that the learning base of each person will be kept as broad as possible. A systematic reading program covering a variety of reading materials is the most convenient and effective way to achieve this. (c.f. reading list at end. )

#### 5) Seeking Help Too Late or in the Wrong Places.

Since students are not often unaware of their learning difficulties until they have been present for some time, counselors should be especially careful to be available to students in an informal way early in their learning career.

It is very likely most students will need some help when beginning a completely new area of study. In such cases, his best guide and counselor is his teacher. He should be encouraged to ask the teacher for supplementary materials which might be recommended by him as aids in learning the courses he teaches.

Students should be alert for signs that their learning is beginning to lag behind the others in the class. Often this is not made obvious until the first quiz is returned. Unless the student is given some special help at this point, he may well be setting the stage for ultimate failure. A good rule of thumb to follow is this: if the student cannot feel that he is making his progress, he is probably having difficulties. This is because his motivation is in jeopardy.



Another help in identifying students who may be having difficulty with their classes without knowing it is to gain an insight into whether the class provides for much discussion or application of what is being learned. Classes devoted entirely to lecture are not likely to remain popular for any length of time with adult students, generally. Such students are very inclined to participate in discussion, to raise questions, and seek concrete applications, and a lecture does not ordinarily permit this. Adults generally seem to learn better in groups which provide opportunities for sharing common or conflicting ideas and in which they can profit from the observations and mistakes of others. Another important quality of groups in which adults learn best is a spirit of friendly rivalry. Competition may be threatening, but friendly rivalry is stimulating, challenging, and supportive.

A final area which should be considered as a source of difficulty for students is the amount of family support which is being given him in his studies. Where the family is not sympathetic or cooperative with the student's educational needs, he can be working under a very serious handicap. Where the family is not backing his efforts, it takes unusual determination and very probably a very close confidante who is very supportive for a person to persevere for long. Obviously, counselors can serve as such a confidante very well.

6) Lack of Efficient Reading and Study Habits.

The vast majority of adults returning to school would be well advised to enroll in a short refresher course on learning to learn and reading improvement first. Where such a course is not available, at least a text on the subject should be purchased and carefully reviewed. The major points around which necessary information should be organized would include.

- a. Preparing to learn, that is, setting the stage psychologically and physically for the learning process. This includes a clarification of purposes, and understanding of the requirements of the course, and knowledge of the schedule of classes, etc.
- b. Organizing to learn -- this implies that an individual arranges his time schedule to allow for adequate study and travel time as well as class time. It may include suggestions about such things as gathering the necessary equipment and preparing a place for study at home or in a public library or other place where a student can spend his study time effectively.
- c. Techniques of study -- this will include textbook attack skills, methods of organization, outlining

techniques, SQ3R approach, knowledge of how to use learning aids included in textbooks, etc.

d. Listening, notemaking, and test taking skills --

The student should be aware of the reading skills necessary to effectively study various subjects. He should know what to look for when he reads novels, essays, and poetry, for example; and he should understand that he is not expected to read everything in the same way. Many adults have not thought about reading for specific purposes for many years and would do well to review a manual which will provide them with guidance and direction in learning to read for details, reading for the general idea, reading to understand principles, reading to solve problems, and reading to follow directions. Many of these students would benefit greatly from a course in vocabulary improvement as well. Special attention should be given to exam skills because many adults are not familiar with objective tests.

These constitute the most common types of academic problems of interest to educational counselors. It should be noted, however, that almost any other problem the student is having whether it be related to his financial affairs, his physical health, his inter-

personal relations, his concept of himself, his concern for society, etc. will always have some bearing on his ability to learn. The process of education itself, however, is very frequently a palative and ultimate remedy for many of these difficulties if the student can but persevere.

Given normal intelligence, average health, and even modest means, probably the most important ingredient in the process of continuing education is perseverance. The value of many of the aids, services, and facilities offered adult students can be measured in terms of how they contribute to this one element of persistence. It is persistence that brings a person through dark periods in his growth pattern. It is persistence which drives him to his ultimate success. It is persistence which enables counselors themselves ultimately to achieve their purposes in helping adults.

Recommended Adult Reading List  
of Fifty Significant Modern Books

THE FOREST & THE SEA

Bates, Marston

THE TRIAL OF DR. ADAMS

Bedford, Sybille

KARL MARX

Berlin, Isiah

MURDER FOR PROFIT

Bolitho, William

SHAKESPEARE

Brown, Ivor

AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Brown, Stuart

MISTER JOHNSON

Carey, Joyce

MISTRESS TO AN AGE

Christopher, Harold J.

OX-BOW INCIDENT

Clark, Walter Van Tilburg

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Davenport, Walter

NAPOLEON'S RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

DeSegur, Count Phillippe-Paul

THE AMERICAN CHARACTER

Drummond, Alexander

STORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Durant, Will

THE IMMENSE JOURNEY

Eiseley, Loren

THE GREAT CRASH

Galbraith, John

THE GREEK WAY

Hamilton, Edith

THE WORLDLY PHILOSOPHERS

Heilbroner, Robert L.

TRUE BELIEVER

Hoffer, Eric

NOTRE-DAME OF PARIS

Hugo, Victor

APES, ANGELS, & VICTORIANS

Irvine, William

ELIZABETH, THE GREAT

Jenkins, Elizabeth

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

Joyce, James

DARKNESS AT NOON

Kingsley, Sidney

REVEILLE IN WASHINGTON

Leech, Margaret

SCREWTAPE LETTERS

Lewis, Clive

A PREFACE TO MORALS

Lippman, Walter

KING SOLOMON'S RING

Lorenz, Konrad

EASTERN APPROACHES

Maclean, Fitzroy

ADMIRAL OF THE OCEAN SEA

Morison, Samuel

JOHN PAUL JONES

Morison, Samuel

LOGBOOK FOR GRACE

Murphy, Robert C.

ANIMAL FARM

Orwell, George

BURMESE DAYS

Orwell, George

ISRAELI

Parker, Louis

STALINGRAD

Plivier, Theodore

BRING OUT YOUR DEAD

Powell, J. H.

THE MAN OF THE RENAISSANCE

Roeder, Ralph

OUT OF AFRICA

Ross, Emory

THE CRIME OF GALILEO

Santillana, George de

ATTENDING MARVELS

Simpson, George



ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVICH

Solzhenitxyn, Alexander Isaevich

DEVIL IN MASSACHUSETTS

Starkey, Marion

RICHER BY ASIA

Taylor, Edmond

THE DOCTOR & THE DEVILS

Thomas, Dylan

THE SEA & THE JUNGLE

Tomlinson, H. M.

THE GREAT REHEARSAL

Van Doren, Carl

MAN & THE LIVING WORLD

Von Frisch, Karl

SAINTS & STRANGERS

Willison, George

THREE WHO MADE A REVOLUTION

Wolfe, Bertram

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

Wolff, Leon

## VOCATIONAL COUNSELING

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### Introduction

If we are to discuss the process of vocational counseling, perhaps we should examine what vocational counseling means to the adult, the major factors that influence his choice of a vocation, how a vocation affects an individual's self-system, and why adults in our various programs need vocational counseling.

The vocational counseling process does not exist in a vacuum. On the one hand it is related to the needs, motives, and aspirations of the individual, and on the other hand it is related to the changing, demanding, work opportunities available to him. Work for the adult student is generally not a new experience. Because of his familiarity with the issues and demands of a work-oriented society, he turns to education in the hope that education will somehow open up locked doors that will enable him to derive greater satisfaction from work than he is presently experiencing. (25).

The counselor in adult education knows that a counselee's job choice will have a tremendous influence on his life. It may well determine his social class, his dress, his hobbies, his goals and

values, his politics, the geographic locale of his home, his physical and mental health, his opinions and attitudes toward life itself. (25, 26). Although the counselor may anticipate the effects of these vocational controls on his counselee's self-system, it is the individual himself who ultimately determines the direction of his vocational decisions with such assistance as he is willing and able to accept from the counselor. And the counselor must, in turn, respect the individual's plan even though it may differ from his own. An individual in a democratic society and in a democratic vocational counseling setting is not assigned to a vocation, despite the results of aptitude tests and suggestions from interest inventories. He has the freedom to choose his own vocation, although the limitations imposed on him by a complex, changing, scientific society and the unique characteristics of his own personality are important considerations. The counselor, however, must be perceptive of the ties that exist between the adult's underlying drives and motives and his vocational goals. The need to be accepted by others, to be approved by others, to find a vocation suitable for one's social class - the social conformity drive - may well be the reason for one adult's vocational goal; the need meet and to work with others yet to maintain an impersonal aloofness might be the reason for a second adult's choice; the need for freedom - to be one's own boss (which may be related to a strict authoritarian

home, according to psychoanalytic theory) may be another reason; the need for economic security - a job with tenure, pension, defined working conditions, and the like; or a need for power control, or social admiration and attention getting may underline the job goals of many adults.

By the time the adult student comes to the counselor for advice or information, he is already the product of the interaction of his particular heredity and the cultural and personal and vocational forces that have made him into the kind of person he is. He has already experienced, directly or indirectly, what Holland (10) calls the "occupational environments" of his society; the "motoric environment" of laborers, machine operators, aviators, farmers; the "intellectual environment" of the physicist, anthropologist, chemist, mathematician, biologist; the "supportive environment" of the social worker, teacher, interviewer, vocational counselor, or therapist; the "conforming environment" of secretaries, bank tellers, bookkeepers and file clerks; the "Persuasive environment" of the salesmen, politician, manager, promoter, and business executive; or the "esthetic environment" of the musician, artist, poet, sculptor, or writer. For one reason or another, which must be understood by the counselor, the adult, when he enters into a vocational counseling relationship, seeks to leave one of these environments to enter another. He assumes that the

counselor will have more vocational information than he has, that the counselor will know more about the socio-economic trends of our economy than he knows, that the counselor may even know more about him as a person, what with his knowledge of psychology and tests, than he knows about himself. And the counselor has an obligation to the client who seeks his services. (7, 28, 29, 30).

The change of vocational direction is not always of the adult's own choosing. Social scientists tell us that the average person today will probably need to consider and enter four or more different vocations during his lifetime because of the rapid technological and scientific changes within our society. Vocational counselors, if they are to do a job commensurate with client expectation, must be informed with respect to the effects of automation on jobs; which jobs are increasing, which declining; what new occupations are appearing; in what way are the manpower needs of a particular community related to the manpower needs of the nation; whether there is a downgrading of skills formerly held in high repute; whether we are becoming a nation of consumers rather than a nation of creators; whether we are requiring a higher level of education and more credentials than jobs warrant; whether the human being is becoming a useless organism to be tolerated by the machine; whether technology is slowly becoming the master or the slave.

The vocational counselor must certainly be aware of the effects



of the educational revolution now taking place in our schools and colleges and whether our society will continue to cling to rather well-defined middle-class values or whether it will have to modify and revise such values in light of increasing demands from those under thirty. He will have to be fortified with knowledge about an ever increasing labor force of professionals and technicians and managers and officials with but a small underpinning of service workers and farmers. Many of those who come to us in the name of vocational counseling for adults need updating, retraining, or training for a new field of work because their old jobs are being phased out. Many of our clients also come because they have begun to recognize within themselves new intellectual and emotional strengths, which can, in large measure, only be actualized through new vocational endeavors guided by understanding, well-informed vocational counselors.

#### Occupational Trends - Extrinsic Factors in Vocational Counseling

Let us now try to answer a few of the questions that have just been raised.

The Manpower Report of the President, transmitted to the Congress, April, 1968 (19), informs us that the total population is expected to increase from 181 million in 1960 to 226 million in 1975 with a concomitant increase in the labor force from 73 million in 1960

to 93 million in 1975. Professional, technical and kindred workers will increase from 7.5 million in 1960 to 12.4 million in 1975 for an incredible increase of 65 percent. Laborers (except farm and mine workers) will decrease in their proportion of the total labor force from 5.5 percent to 4 percent. Agricultural workers, already the most outstanding example of technological change, will decrease a further 28 percent. Service workers are projected to increase from 8.3 million to 12.5 million.

The Manpower Report (19) also points out that more training is now required for the maintenance positions where technological changes have been made because a combination of electronic, electro-mechanical and sometimes even hydraulic operations are involved. For this reason many instrument repairmen and business machine servicemen need post-high school education in engineering fundamentals, mechanics, or electronics, in addition to intensive occupational training. The Report further states that maintenance electricians and appliance men will need more technical education in order to handle a growing number and variety of electronic devices. In the scientific and engineering professions, aside from accretions of knowledge in all fields, new specialities have come into being, for instance, cryogenics, bionics, ultrasonics, computer technology, and microelectronics.

Wolfbein (38) in his 1964 report on Employment and Unemployment

in the United States, writes that the occupational pattern in 1900 which showed one of every three male workers employed as laborers on or off the farm required a relatively low degree of educational attainment by the labor force. This is contrasted with a job pattern that showed in 1960 one in three male workers engaged as either a professional and technical person or a skilled craftsman and, therefore, requiring a significantly higher degree of education in the labor force.

What all this means for the vocational counselor of adults and of young people is that he must now have a thorough understanding of an industrial world which increasingly demands a labor force that is better educated and better informed with respect to scientific skills than has ever been required of manpower before.

Those who have studied the problem in some detail (4, 21, 20, 32, 33) note that industry alone estimates that increased automation will mean thousands more of college graduates each year, just to keep going. And those of us on college campuses are certainly aware of the expanding opportunities for college graduates in medicine, teaching, nursing, social work, and the other helping professions, as we become more disturbed about the health and educational needs of an increasing population.

So far we have tried to draw some attention to the labor force as a whole. Let us now turn our attention to the women in our economy

who have begun to play such an important role in the same labor force. Many of the adults who have and will continue to come to you for vocational counseling will be women who, for one reason or another, have returned to school. Women today are employed in every occupation and profession listed in the decennial census. They have even invaded that highly prized male sanctum sanctorum - horse-racing. Furthermore, federal legislation now assures them equal opportunity and equal pay to that of the male population. Financial assistance for vocational training, advanced courses and higher education is becoming increasingly available to them.\* At the present time, nearly half the women in the population between the ages of 18 and 65 are in the labor force and the percentage continues to rise rapidly. When the adult woman comes to the counselor for vocational counseling, she has already gone beyond her earlier dream of a romantic image of life; school, marriage, a family and life happily ever after; she now knows that a more accurate life pattern of the modern women includes school, work, and/or marriage, rearing a family while continuing to work either by choice or necessity, and a return to work when the youngest child is in school.\* "This 'quiet revolution' in the life pattern of American women presents a special challenge to those responsible for the

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\* U. S. Dept. of Labor, Wage and Labor Standards Administration Women's Bureau, Washington, D. C. W. B 69056, November, 1968.

\* *ibid*

counseling of girls" and women.

The increase in teenage marriage means that about half of today's women are married by the age of 21; they have their last child at about the age of 30; by the time the youngest child is in school, a mother may have 30 to 35 more years of active life before her. \* Many of them have and many more will continue to return to school to pick up where they have left off. What does the vocational counselor have to know in order to assist women about occupational trends?

Labor force projections through the 1980's indicate that women and youth will provide the largest source of new entrants into the labor force. About 29 million women, 16 years of age and over, are in the labor force; more than one out of every three workers is a woman; almost three out of five women workers are married (58 percent); 21 percent are single; 21 percent are widowed, divorced, or separated; about 2.7 million women workers are heads of their families.

#### Job Satisfaction - Intrinsic Factors in Vocational Counseling

So far we have looked at a few economic facts relative to vocational counseling. But many of the adults in our college programs have returned in order to prepare themselves for either the professions or for those upper-level business positions that will presumably yield

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\* ibid



them greater personal satisfaction than they now derive from their work roles.

The Manpower Report previously referred to (19, p. 48) states that "The higher an individual's position in the occupational hierarchy, the more likely he is to experience satisfaction in his employment . . . the findings of job satisfaction studies (34, 2) have been consistent and generally unequivocal. Satisfaction is greater among white-collar than blue-collar workers as a whole, and typically is found to be highest among professionals and businessmen and lowest among unskilled laborers. "

Gurin and his associates in their book Americans View Their Mental Health (9), found, for example, that the highest proportion, 42 percent of very satisfied workers, was in the professional-technical classification, and the lowest, 13 percent, in the unskilled laborer group. The clerical and the sales workers surveyed in the study expressed somewhat less satisfaction with their employment than did semiskilled manual workers; a relatively high level of satisfaction was expressed by farmers, despite the downward trends of agricultural employment. In this connection, it might be well to note that selective factors are possibly at work, since many of the people most dissatisfied with farming are likely to have migrated to urban areas and those who remain or are drawn to farming are

probably those to whom the general life style of farming is more appealing than the complexity of urban life.

The relative importance of the different factors in job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is found to vary by occupational groups. What an individual perceives as satisfying or dissatisfying is necessarily determined by his own values, needs and motives, and expectations, as well as by the objective features of his present working environment. Different groups may have quite different reactions to the same set of job circumstances.

Thus, Centers and Bugental (3) in their recent study of work motivations of members of an urban population found that, by and large, workers in white-collar categories attached greater significance to the intrinsic factors related to the work itself, i. e., interesting work, use of skills and talents, and feelings of satisfaction, while the blue-collar workers placed comparatively greater stress on factors pertaining to the context in which the work was performed, the extrinsic factors of pay, job security, and coworkers. However, it should be noted that a job that calls for the exercise of considerable skill or talent is also more likely to provide higher wages, a good measure of job security, and more than minimally adequate working conditions.

Do nonwork activities provide greater satisfaction than work

activities? Does going to school provide greater satisfaction for your adult student than his daily work situation? There are very few studies in this regard, but Friedlander in 1966 (5) found that among government employees, at least, work is the pivot around which their other activities are planned. On the average, both blue and white-collar respondents considered their jobs far more important to feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction than recreation, education, or the church.

#### Implications for Vocational Counseling

Taking into account both the extrinsic and the intrinsic pressures on the adult student, what are the implications for vocational counseling? What is vocational counseling? The first description of vocational counseling, as we know it, is ascribed to Frank Parsons, who in 1909 (22, p. 5) wrote that vocational counseling included: 1) "a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, your abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes;" 2) "a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages, compensations, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work;" and 3) "true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts."

Other definitions that have since been offered may be more detailed and include more emphasis on the interpersonal relationships between counselor and counselee but the basic principles for vocational

counseling first expounded in Parson's Choosing a Vocation, still hold. (23, 30, 31, 35, 36, 37).

For adults in higher education, the definition of vocational counseling might well include, according to my own way of thinking, that it is the process of helping an individual to understand the variety of influences in his life that have led him to his present work role; to assist him to reevaluate that work role in light of his more mature, realistic appreciation of his potentialities against the opportunities now available to him in a demanding, complex society - so that he may be able to derive maximum personal satisfaction from his work and society may be able to profit from his efforts. (30).

Not long ago vocational counseling consisted of information giving. Questions about the counselee were elicited, tests were administered, job requirements were checked by the counselor and then, after matching job requirements with the individual's inventory of assets and limitations, the counselee was assisted in examining appropriate occupations. Implicit in this kind of vocational counseling formulation was the assumption that dissatisfaction with one's work-role was due to a lack of information about oneself and the world of work. (30, p. 191-197).

A more recent influence on implications for vocational counseling has been Roger's non-directive or client-centered approach

where the emphasis has been primarily on attitudes and feelings rather than on so-called objective facts. The client is helped to explore his attitudes and feelings, to develop self-understanding and self-acceptance, without the benefit of tests and educational and vocational information (26, 27).

The confusion resulting from either using the inventory method of test results and information giving or the method of exploring attitudes and feelings without the use of tests and occupational information has been a source of difficulty for the counselor who works primarily with adults. On the one hand the counselor has been trained to use tests and occupational information; on the other hand, he recognizes the importance of emotional influences and the individual's concept of self as determining factors in occupational decisions. In order to resolve the problem, those who feel more comfortable with tests and information giving continue to do so, reasoning that client-centered counseling and self-concept ideologies do not necessarily apply to vocational counseling.

Those who have studied and have made serious attempts to understand the client-centered approach, however, are convinced that the basic principles of client-centered counseling are as applicable to vocational counseling as they are to personal counseling.



(11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 23). In the words of C. H. Patterson (23, p. 223), they feel that "... the essence of counseling is the relationship. It is not the use of the interview, of tests, of specific techniques, or the surroundings which constitute counseling. It is a human relationship wherein the counselor provides the psychological climate or conditions in which the client is enabled to change, to become able to make choices, resolve his problem and develop a responsible independence which makes him a better person and a better member of society." This description of counseling in no way prevents the counselor from using tests and occupational information where needed. There need be no conflict between client-centered counseling and educational and vocational counseling. Tests and occupational information are appropriate where they are needed and where they are useful to help a client solve a problem and make a decision. (27). The very same techniques used in personal counseling can be adapted to vocational counseling. Of course, I for one, have never yet had a client whose vocational needs were unrelated to his attitudes, feelings, and personal adjustment. I have never had a client whose problems were solely in the realm of vocational counseling. Analyze the contents of your own counseling sessions with adults. More often than not

they will include feelings about himself, his employer, his family, although the reason given for the initial interview might well have been vocational counseling. Continue to interview him and he will reveal vocational and avocational interests, the kind of people he would prefer to work with and why, his vocational objectives in light of his abilities, interests, and hobbies, the barriers or conflicts which prevent fulfillment of vocational objectives. The client's associations evoked during the interview relate not only to vocations but also to personal involvement and personal needs which may sometimes have little to do with test results and occupational information.

There are those who speak of vocational counseling as a distinct area of student personnel work where "normal" individuals, whatever "normal" means, come only for assistance with vocational decisions. It may be that there are such people whose emotional concerns are of secondary importance compared to their occupational problems, but unfortunately I have personally never met this kind of "normal" individual. The fault may be mine. I am interested in the whole person, his present work situation, his vocational aspirations, and the personality dynamics of conflict and frustration which prevent him from achieving maximum satisfaction and his personal life and vocational role. (24, 31). For me, there is no dichotomy. Numerous studies have indicated

that those who are least able to experience gratification in employment are also apt to face difficulty in achieving a satisfactory state in their personal life; those who are above average in job satisfaction are happier, better adjusted people; the lower the level of job satisfaction the greater the mental health risk. (17, 18).

I believe that vocational counseling involves, in addition to the basic principles of counseling (a deep, sensitive appreciation of the client and his problems), and the possible utilization of tests and occupational information where and when needed, an understanding of the socio-economic influences within the society in which the client lives and an awareness of the impact of these influences on the client's life and interpersonal relationships. The client's socio-economic situation may call for an immediate, specific vocational decision and it may be the counselor's job to help the client reach that decision in light of extenuating circumstances but the counselor, at the same time, should leave the door open so that the client may return when circumstances have changed.

Vocational counseling, with adults in particular, calls for an understanding of the effects of job choice on family responsibilities which the adult has undertaken. Having a wife and several children dependent on one's earnings might well preclude immediate try-out

in a new vocational area, no matter one's interests and abilities and potentialities. Under these conditions, vocational counseling might well become family counseling. This is not to say once a teacher always a teacher, or once a plumber always a plumber. It does suggest, however, a realistic awareness of the many, many issues that must be considered in the realm of vocational counseling with adults. Following a sequence of suggested course credits, for example, may open or close vocational doors to the counselee. Terminal education in a junior college, unless the college has a transfer program, may make it more difficult for the adult to continue on toward a baccalaureate degree, a requirement for many vocational areas. Immersed in courses that one is primarily intrigued with without regard to the other programs of study that have been designed to develop an individual into a well-rounded, intelligent, educated person, may also limit his success in his chosen vocational field. More than one successful business or professional man has been heard to say, "I miss the background in art and literature and music; my concentration was solely in economics, or the sciences, or business administration and now I meet men in my kind of work who are as much at home in the arts as they are in business or in the professions; I feel inadequate." The excitement and hopefulness of all this, however, is that many

of these same men are now returning to our adult classes in search of intellectual stimulation that will enrich their everyday working lives. I do not believe that we can engage in vocational counseling without considering the effects of current educational policy on future vocational objectives.

Vocational decisions for the adult become less and less reversible as he grows older for he has already invested much time and energy and thought in his decisions. Counseling in this area, therefore, brings with it the need to recognize the effect of technological and scientific changes on the adult's work role, how he perceives himself as he is threatened by the introduction of new machines and bright young men who appear to have all the answers. And finally, counseling the adult student should also include ways of helping him to modify his work load as he begins to feel the effects of his years where the work-role is no longer as important as the "golden" years that lie ahead of him. For in the words of Cicero, "Nor is it the body only that must be supported, but still more the intellect and the soul, for they are like lamps - unless you feed them with oil, they go out."



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## GROUP COUNSELING FOR ADULT COLLEGE STUDENTS

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As many members of Commission XIII of the American College Personnel Association are aware, the adult student is frequently neglected when it comes to college student personnel services. Our own journal has only had two articles dealing with the adult student over the past three years. This neglect is also found in many college counseling centers as adults frequently feel that service is for other students. Before getting into some of the problems and potential solutions in the adult student world, we should probably play the semantics game and get involved in definitions.

As I discuss the adult over the next few minutes, I am talking about that person who is probably over 25 years of age. He may be graduate or under-graduate, full time or part time but he generally sees himself as being different from the typical 18 to 22 year old college student. In some cases he is different. In some cases his major stress and emphasis is on academic preparation to prepare him for a vocation. He is frequently disenchanted with those requirements which don't lead directly to vocational preparation and often is not a participant in extra-



curricular activities. The few surveys performed to explore this problem indicate that the typical adult does not participate because he is only interested in vocational preparation or because he feels out-of-place with the typical undergraduate college student.

As a part of the semantics game I suppose we should also briefly mention what we mean when we talk about counseling. In this respect it may be easier to say what counseling is not rather than what it is. But let's try both, recognizing that there is much disagreement in whether or not there is a difference between counseling and psychotherapy. It is my contention that there is a difference although I would agree that the difference may be only in depth. I would say that counseling is not a long term therapeutic process designed to change one's personality. Counseling, whether it be group or individual, is a process whereby one or more individuals engage in an intimate relationship, the goal of which is to assist individuals to learn to solve problems with which they are unable to cope.

It is likely that any area which can be effectively explored in individual counseling can also be handled in the group setting. Personally, having tried both, I much prefer group counseling to individual counseling. The dynamics of interaction between group members, the awareness that others have problems, the ease with which participants can communicate with each other, and the overall sense of worthwhile-ness that seems to come from assisting another human being, are all

reasons why I find group counseling to be exciting and stimulating. It is an effective educational process whereby individuals learn to look at themselves as others see them within a group context. As with t-groups and sensitivity groups, the emphasis is on here and now activities, planning for the future and how can the college or university be of assistance to you. Discussions of past history are discouraged since the past cannot be changed and is frequently distorted by perception and time. It is an educational process as individuals not only learn about themselves but learn how to relate to others. When a member appears to make too many others in the group uncomfortable, appears to be extremely unrealistic or highly agitated or disturbed, or continues to discuss problems inappropriate to the make-up of the group, this member is then referred to another professional person for much more intense assistance.

My own group counseling style differs a bit from my individual counseling behavior. Within the initial group sessions, I take a more active participant role and my behavior is much more aggressive and confrontive, than in individual counseling, as I attempt to encourage interaction and get the group to look at alternatives to problems. The group must also understand that it is the individual who must decide the best course of action for himself, and on this issue I am very directive. This is a difficult process for group members to grasp,

that is while they may offer suggestions and encourage the exploration of alternative behaviors, the final decision must rest with the individual himself. While there are differences in style between individual and group counseling behavior, there are also similarities. Although the counselor may take an active, aggressive, confrontive role and does listen carefully, not to just one but to everything that goes on, he also needs to look very carefully for the wide variety of non-verbal clues which indicate discomfort, agreement or disagreement with what is being said. The counselor stresses an examination of interaction between group members rather than focusing in on a single individual. The counselor rarely makes eye contact with the participant who is doing the talking, rather he scans the entire group to observe their reactions to the speaker. After all when one is talking, you know what he is doing but it is important to observe reactions to the speaker and the content. This is a difficult process for some beginning group counselors to learn since much of their previous learning and indeed much of their previous life experiences have stressed the importance of making eye contact with its connotations of trust and honesty.

But, the premise of this paper deals with group counseling and the adult population. What kinds of services can counselors in a college or university offer the adult student. Probably, first and foremost is assistance with the advisement and registration procedures.

Every counselor who has not been through the registration procedures ought to assume the role of a student in his own institution and find out what it's like to attempt to secure answers to questions, attempt to register for classes, and attempt to find one's way around campus as a confused student. Once the counselor has had this experience, he may better be able to empathize with other students and adults who have to fight the process. Most colleges and universities have some way around the complex for graduate and part-time students. These may involve early or late registration procedures, waiving tests and course requirements and the like. The counselor working with adults, and indeed any student, should appraise him of the possible loopholes and this can be done in group orientation sessions. If registration is a frustrating and anxiety provoking experience for the typical student, think how much more so it is to the adult who may have some reservations about his own ability to cope in an academic environment. Rather than place obstacles in the way of the adult, it would behoove the counselor to remove these obstacles. Thus, group orientation sessions can be established for the beginning adults in an effort to orient them to many of the procedures required for enrolling in a college or university, as well as to explain the necessity of having the procedures and what ways there may be around the procedure. If the college or university requires a college entrance exam, the adult may be discouraged at having to take

the test. He may not know that the university he is attending has decided that the test is not applicable to the adult population, although this is not generally published. Or, he may not know that the adult may have to take the test but doesn't have to take it prior to his admission to the program. All of these orientation services may be performed in group settings either days or evenings depending on the needs of the students.

Even before orientation, there is another valuable group counseling or discussion service that can be offered by the counselors. A large number of adults, and particularly women, have a feeling that they want to go to school but don't know which way to turn. A series of testing and group counseling programs can be initiated which allow the adults to express their anxieties and receive support from other adults regarding these fears and concerns. The mutual exchange of information coupled with group interpretation of some of the tests will usually add some direction to the planned course of study. In addition, the offering of a testing and pre-academic counseling group may well be a source of recruiting students to credit and non-credit programs.

In addition to orientation, there are a number of other group counseling services which can be offered to the adult student. College personnel staff working with adults merely need to look at the problems of adults in their community and at the problems of adult students enrolled in their college or university to determine the kinds of services



which may assist in the solution of the problems. For example, a highly innovative and well-publicized program was developed by a Mr. Raymond Ziegler of the United States Employment Service in conjunction with the Counseling Center for Adults of the Division of Continuing Education in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Ziegler, a part-time graduate student in guidance, became concerned at the number of older workers who were being replaced due to age or automation. Mr. Ziegler observed that many of the older workers suffered a psychological trauma which incapacitated them to an extent where they were even unable to look for other employment. He recruited several of these older workers, engaged in group testing using some of the more common (although inappropriate) group interest and aptitude tests which are available on the market. He then engaged in a group test interpretation, and through a series of group interaction sessions encouraged the older workers to go out and secure employment using their own stated interests, experiences and test results. Instead of waiting for want ads to appear in the paper and instead of depending on employment agencies, the group members used the yellow pages of the telephone book as an employment directory and "pounded the pavement" looking for work. In the group settings these older workers related their job seeking experiences and often acted as a referral source to other group members, when they heard of a job opening for which they were not hired. The outcome of this

experience was so positive that it grew from ten and fifteen members to over seventy within the first year and has since served several thousand individuals. It became so large that the program could no longer be handled by the facilities of the Division of Continuing Education and has since been maintained by the Portland Community College. It also appeared to be so successful that it was expanded to a program serving anyone, not just older adults. In this case, the entire emphasis was on group referral, group resources and group interaction. When an individual appeared to be so highly traumatized or appeared to have personal problems that were inappropriate for this group to handle, the individual was referred for personal counseling to the Counseling Center for Adults.

To determine other needs, one merely has to talk with a number of adult graduate students to learn that there is frequently a need for marriage and family counseling on the campus. Visits to married students housing, where one may observe the interaction between students' children and between the married couples themselves, is often indicative of adults starting to crack under the pressure of time, energy and effort necessary to successfully complete a highly intensive competitive, school program. The stress of trying to make it through school at either the graduate or under-graduate level frequently produces a strain that even the most stable marriages and families

have difficulty overcoming. Settings such as these are naturals for group counseling as the individual members develop a sense of awareness that others have problems similar to theirs and that they are able to help each other solve their problems. Generally, the emphasis is on "here and now" activities. The group leader discourages raking up past histories, feuds and antagonisms. The emphasis in marriage and family counseling tends to fall in five areas.

1. Improving interaction and communication among members.
2. Reducing perceptual distortion which arises out of different value systems and life experiences.
3. Developing a sense of awareness of the impact an individual has on others and their reactions to the individual
4. Clarifying role expectations for the individual, that is those expected roles that one's family expects him to play.
5. Offering a setting for trying out new roles with the support and encouragement of group members.

When there are severe personality problems or problems which are so overwhelming that the group either cannot handle or is too uncomfortable to handle than the individual or family is referred to another agency or service for more intensive counseling.

With the emphasis today on self-awareness, becoming an individual, and being sensitive to the needs of others, another service

being requested of many schools are the t-group or sensitivity experiences. Most of these are offered on a non-credit tuition basis. Most are services purchased by employers. However, a number of students hear of the positive (and sometimes negative) effects of sensitivity training and desire to participate in a similar experience. Thus, this too is another group experience which the counselor working with adults may be able to offer. Many of the older adult students with adolescent children have problems coping with the new and different value system of the adolescent. Sensitivity experiences along with role playing may help the adult first learn to appreciate the differences between youth and himself and then help him to cope with the problems caused by these differences.

There are a number of occupational groups who seem to be in need of guided group discussion in an effort to assist them in improving their image, developing understanding about their roles in a changing society or just learning to compete, exist or survive in this seemingly chaotic world. Included in some of these groups are ministers who seem to have a real need to explore who they are and where they are going; groups of police who are extremely concerned about public reaction to their image; groups of businessmen who may wish to gain some ideas into how they may assist in the social changes occurring in this country as well as a number of special interest groups. An

example of a group being served by a special series is the Special Programs for Women offered by the Division of Continuing Education of the Oregon State System of Higher Education. Further information about these programs can be secured from Mrs. Sue Gordon of the Division Office at 1633 Southwest Park Avenue, Portland, Oregon, 97201. Several years ago these programs were developed which afforded experiences to assist women who were seeking opportunities for their own personal growth and development. These developmental experiences may be related to the woman as an individual, to her family, to her career, or to community services. The entire emphasis was to assist those interested women in facing the challenges offered by life in today's complex world. Programs, mostly geared toward those women over twenty-five, consisted of individual and group counseling, testing, series of special discussions, and credit and non-credit courses including some in how to study, in financial planning, estate planning, landscaping, communication, religion, cultural activities, parental effectiveness, physical exercise for women and self-defense. Topics of special interest included intensive workshops dealing with problems of divorce or widowhood, the single woman or mothers with problem children.

These are programs developed out of special needs expressed by groups of individuals. Home extension agencies and extension services



or university departments of continuing education have long geared their services to meet some of these special needs. However some programs, and the Portland program is an example, can become highly specialized. As mentioned previously women are not the only interest area. Increasingly around the country, programs are being developed for minority groups and other special interest groups such as the above-mentioned ministers, police and others.

In conclusion, I might say that there are a variety of group experiences which can be offered to the adult coming to the college campus. The variety is limited only by the imagination, the willingness to work, and the creativity of the staff. Before closing a word of caution. There are several factors which can kill a program. Although most programs can be made to be fairly self-supporting, the lack of finances can hamper its effectiveness. Apathy on the part of the population or staff may kill a program. If it is apathy on the part of the population, then perhaps the program deserves to die or at least be re-evaluated. But, probably the greatest hazard to a staff is a successful program. Successful programs have a tendency to grow faster than staff is able to develop or cope with them. You must be aware that you can literally kill yourselves attempting to service all of the demands. You and your staff must place limits on some of your activities and allow them to grow in an organized, systematic fashion. You can afford to be

different and indeed it is being different that frequently attracts attention to you and your program." You can learn, and indeed learning is one of the growth and developmental experiences that comes out of working with groups of other people. You will learn that you frequently do not have the answers and even more will probably learn that you are frequently unaware of many of the problems confronting members belonging to a group different from your own. You will probably learn that the group itself has the resources to solve most of their own problems. Your function is to serve as a catalyst, and a stimulator, and a facilitator as you bring together group members and encourage their interaction. I encourage each and every one of you to take a close look at the possibility of offering some kinds of group services. I feel confident that you, your organization and the adult students with whom you are working will all benefit from the experience.

## PARTICIPANT EVALUATION OF WORKSHOP

### COUNSELING ADULTS: CONTEMPORARY DIMENSIONS

Participants in the 1969 Pre Convention Workshop in Counseling Adults completed two different evaluation instruments, each containing eighteen items. The two questionnaires overlapped somewhat but thus contributed to the validity of some of the answers.

The environment (Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas) became a factor both positive and negative in the workshop. Since participants had to travel through the casino to get to the workshop and to get to lunch on their rooms, it served as a distraction. At the same time the 24 hour a day operation, the all night shows, and the holiday atmosphere, contributed to more of a superficial involvement by the participants than had been experienced in the two previous workshops. Only 90% of the participants completed the evaluation forms even though copies were mailed to those participants who had failed to complete them in Las Vegas.

While the faculty of the workshop and the commission members were satisfied that this workshop was a worthwhile undertaking, they agreed too that it did not give us the same high level feeling of professional accomplishment as the previous Dallas and Detroit Workshops of 1967 and 1968. Respondents rating's and comments have been statistically tabulated and are here reported.

What is your overall evaluation of the Workshop?

Excellent 0% Good 61% Fair 33% Poor 6%

To what degree did it meet your expectations?

Completely 6% Considerably 44% Somewhat 50% Poorly 0%

Was the emphasis of program content on areas of importance to you?

Yes 39% Somewhat 50% No 11%

Rate the program as to the degree to which it held your interest.

Excellent 6% Good 61% Fair 33% Poor 0%

The amount of information given was:

Too much 0% About right 61% Barely adequate 28% inadequate 11%

What was your personal reason for attending?

- "Learn contemporary demensions in counseling today's adult students. "
- "Professional growth. " "More involved in counseling. "
- "To learn from the experience of others. "
- "Bring self up to date in current program. "
- "To see what's going on among the Commission? Their current emphases?"
- "To become reacquainted with other counselors from out of state. "
- "To expand knowledge of what other institutions and individuals are doing in the area of adult education. "
- "General interest in the program. "

Rate the program as to the amount of new knowledge gained.

Extensive 0% Adequate 61% Little 39%

How stimulating was the program?

Highly 11% Moderately 89% Slightly 0%

How relevant was the information to your work?

Quite 39% Slightly 50% Limited use 11%

The length of the Workshop was:

Too Long 11% About right 89% Too Short 0%

How would you rate the opportunities for exchange of information between participants during the workshop?

Very good 33% Adequate 50% Lacking 17%

What single feature did you enjoy most?

"Opportunity to meet and communicate informally with commission members."

"Small group experience. " "Case presentation. "

"Questions after presentations. " "Work sessions. "

"Exchange of personal experiences. "

"Meeting people from different schools. "

What specific topics would you like to have included in the program?

"An approach to today's adult student as different from yesterday's. "

"More on para-professional training and use of. "

"Sensitivity training for participants. "

"Group counseling for mature women. "

"Individual counseling and minority group counseling. "

"Campus unrest and increase of black student-counseling. "

"Distinguished aspects of adult part-time student counseling needs. "

"More psychometry. " "Live demonstrations. "

"Rational-direct counseling. "

"Counseling the hard core unemployable. "

"Expansion of educational counseling. "

Do you prefer:

a) Individual speakers for each session? Yes 87% No 13%

b) Panel of speakers for each session? Yes 64% No 36%

c) Informal discussion format? Yes 100% No 0%

d) Open meetings to include APGA members? Yes 70% No 30%

Participation:

Satisfactory : Unsatisfactory

a) Length of papers. . . . . 100% : 0%

b) Length of group sessions . . . . . 83% : 17%



	Satisfactory : Unsatisfactory
c) Opportunity for interpersonal and interprofessional exchange outside of formal sessions. . . . .	88% : 12%

## Conference theme:

a) Pertinent for you?    Yes 87%    No 13%

b) Theme suggestions for the future:

"Para-professionals in counseling"  
 "Counseling of mature women"  
 "New Directions"  
 "Review of Research"  
 "Group counseling for women"  
 "Continuing education for women"  
 "Bridging the Generation gap through group counseling"  
 "The college drop-out and the evening college"  
 "The marginal high school graduate and the evening college"  
 "More case studies"  
 "Student population hysteria-Re adult" ????  
 "Educational counseling for the part time student"  
 "Beyond education and vocational counseling"  
 "Rational directive counseling"  
 "Transactional Group Dynamics" ????

## Comments:

"This is a fine workshop and certainly met its objectives. "  
 "Slow moving-insufficient participation by group members. "  
 "Most of presentation was irrevelant to my particular work setting. "  
 "Nothing new offered."  
 "You didn't define what you consider 'adult'. "

## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

AMERICAN COLLEGE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

COMMISSION XIII-STUDENT PERSONNEL WORK

FOR ADULTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

COUNSELING ADULTS: CONTEMPORARY DIMENSIONS

Friday, March 28, 1969

1:30- 2:00 P. M.	Registration and Coffee Presiding	Kaback
2:00- 3:00	Short-Term Counseling: How----When---Where	McDaniel
3:00- 4:00	First Group Work Session	
4:00- 5:00	General Discussion Presiding	Grenfell
7:00- 8:00	Case Conference: Presentation of a Typical Case of Adult Counseling	Thompson

Saturday, March 29, 1969

	Presiding	Thompson
9:00-10:00 A. M.	Educational Counseling	Fisher
10:00-10:45	Vocational Counseling	Kaback
10:45-11:00	Coffee	
11:00-12:00	Second Group Work Session	
12:00-1:00 P. M.	General Discussion	
	Presiding	Kaback
2:00- 2:45	Group Counseling	Grenfell
2:45- 3:00	Coffee	
3:00- 4:00	Third Group Work Session	
4:00- 5:00	General Discussion	
5:00- 6:00	Summary and Evaluation of Group Workshops	Thompson

## APPENDIX B.

## PURPOSE

This Workshop has been planned to provide student personnel workers for adults with experiences to:

1. Inquire into the counseling needs of the adult student.
2. Examine a variety of counseling techniques suitable for adult students in higher education.
3. Participate in small group work sessions to discuss methods and techniques related to counseling adults.
4. Become involved in meaningful dialogue with the Workshop faculty and with each other in a search for ways of improving counseling services for adults.

## WORKSHOP FACULTY

Dr. Joseph A. Fisher  
Drake University

Mr. John E. Grenfell  
Southern Illinois University

Dr. Goldie Ruth Kaback  
City College of the  
City University of New York

Dean Reuben McDaniel, Jr.  
Baldwin Wallace College

Dean Clarence H. Thompson  
Drake University

ROSTER OF REGISTRANTS  
COMMISSION XIII - ACPA PRE CONVENTION WORKSHOP  
COUNSELING ADULTS: CONTEMPORARY DIMENSIONS

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## APPENDIX D.

ROSTER OF ACPA COMMISSION XIII  
STUDENT PERSONNEL WORK FOR ADULTS  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr. Goldie R. Kaback, Chairman  
City College of the City  
University of New York

Dean Clarence H. Thompson,  
Past-Chairman  
Drake University

Mr. John E. Grenfell  
Vice-Chairman  
Southern Illinois University

Dr. Vera Schletzer  
Executive Committee  
University of Minnesota

Dean John S. Bailey  
Northeastern University

Dr. Jane B. Berry  
Kansas City, Missouri

Mr. Thomas O. Brown  
University of Akron

Mr. William D. Dannenmaier  
University of Calgary

Dr. Joseph A. Fisher  
Drake University

Mr. Jerrold I. Hirsch  
Staten Island Community College

Dr. Mary T. Howard  
Augsburg College

Mr. Joseph M. Jolda  
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Mrs. Rosalind K. Loring  
University of California at  
Los Angeles

Dr. Kathryn S. Randolph  
University of Minnesota

Dr. Nancy K. Schlossberg  
Wayne State University

Mr. George G. Thompson  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Mr. William T. Tracy  
Marquette University

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**on Adult Education**